



News from

Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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Rep. Kind Acts to Help Ensure Quality Medical Care for Injured Soldiers

Washington, DC – U.S. Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI) today joined an overwhelming majority of the House in passing H.R. 1538, the Wounded Warrior Assistance Act.

Over the past several months, media reports have brought to light substandard living conditions at some of the country's military healthcare facilities, including Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC. The exposure led to reviews of the Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care facilities across the nation, revealing widespread administrative problems.

"Each day we have wounded servicemen and women returning home from Iraq to these facilities," Rep. Kind said. "We share a collective responsibility to these men and women to fix that which is broken and to ensure they receive the care they have earned."

The bipartisan Wounded Warrior Assistance Act responds to the issues brought to light at America's military health care facilities by:

- Working to improve the access to quality outpatient medical care at military health care facilities;
- Making mental health a priority, and requiring DOD to develop a plan to help prevent Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and other combat-related mental health disorders;
- Restoring the integrity and efficiency of the disability evaluation system and taking other steps to cut bureaucratic red-tape;
- Requiring accountability through the establishment of an oversight board and annual evaluations of the veterans' medical system; and
- Improving the transition of wounded service members from the Armed Forces to the VA system.

According to the Pentagon, more than 24,000 service members have been wounded in Iraq since the beginning of the war – with more than 10,500 of those unable to return to duty.

"I am proud of our VA facility in Tomah, which fared well in the department's internal review," Rep. Kind said. "Unfortunately, this is not true of every facility, and I am saddened by the treatment some of our returning troops and veterans have received. However, these disclosures have given us an opportunity to conduct a thorough nationwide review of our veterans' care system. We must now work to reduce the backlog of infrastructure improvements and try to streamline the complex paperwork that so often causes delays."